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NOTE ON ROSENTHAL

He has been known to the Alexandria Police for twenty years as a man generally holding very advanced ideas on social questions. The Police have described him from time to time as an anarchist, or, politically dangerous. An observer who knows him and on whose information every reliance can be placed, says that there is no doubt that he holds very strong Communist ideas and that he is active in disseminating them. He is not an agitator in the accepted meaning of the term but there is no question he wishes to alter the present social order of things, but he is not believed to favour violent methods. His present aim is to unite all workers in Egypt into one big confederation and there is no doubt that one of the methods by which he hopes to achieve this is to by gradually educating the workers in Communist ideas he holds.

Holding the views he does, he would obviously encourage and associate himself with such a Club as the "ETUDES SOCIALES", which avowedly is "THIRD INTERNATIONAL" in character. There is also no question he is in touch as an Agent or correspondent in Egypt (note: an open Agent as far as is known) of the "THIRD INTERNATIONAL". He is in communication with LEVINOFF, who is said to be Bolshevic representative at Cairo, Alexandria, while he also communicates with "THIRD INTERNATIONAL" Agencies in Vienna

Joseph Rosenthal (1872-1966) is known to historians of early Egyptian communism as a central figure in the inception of the movement. However, his contribution to the formation and activities of the first Egyptian Communist Party lasted a mere 3 years, even less, in his 94-year long life!

In the course of my research on the history of British colonial policing of socialism, communism and syndicalism, and how it shaped post-colonial policies, nationalist narratives, and Egyptian nationality legislation and practices, I kept finding threads leading back to Rosenthal in various archives and literatures.

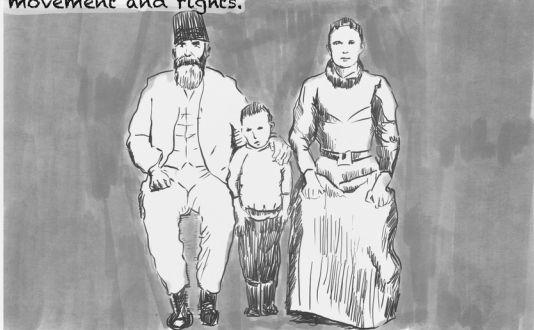
The more I traced his life story and intellectual and personal trajectory, the more I found his biography to be a powerful testimony of the conflicting forces that shaped the modern history of Egypt and the region, between nationalism and internationalism, sectarianism and universalism, statism and anti-authoritarianism..

In this short graphic interpretation of his life, I will share my ongoing attempts to reconstitute Joseph Rosenthal's intriguing trajectory; what was it like to be an Ashkenazi Jew born in Palestine in the 19th century; a Hasidic teenager son of an ostracized proponent of the Jewish enlightenment movement; a Jewish migrant artisan in Beirut, then Cairo and Alexandria, who came to be critical to all religions' condoning of class hierarchies and exploitation, an Ottoman anarcho-syndicalist with a transnational agenda of solidarity and activism at the turn of the century, a communist and a syndicalist in the context of rising interwar Egyptian nationalism, a Jew struggling to have his Egyptian nationality recognized and his voting rights granted in post-war Egypt; and finally, an aging man who persisted in living through the loss of everything..

In all of this, we learn how sectarian and nationalist maps were drawn over a reality of complex and fragmented identities and trajectories. We also learn how colonialism has been intrinsic to the nature of post-coloniality in the region.

Rim Naguib
Berlin 2022

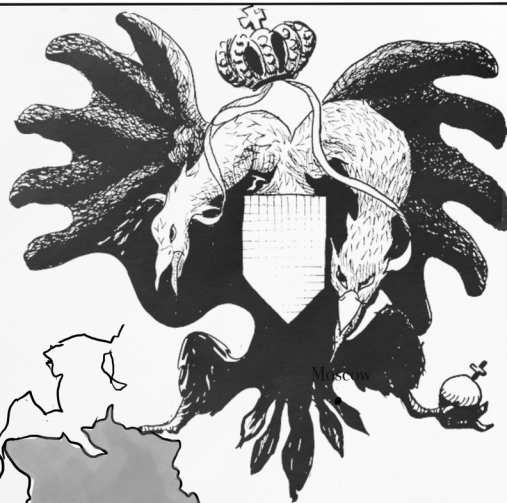
Joseph's background and the beginning of his trajectory is bound with Judaism. His father, David Rosenthal, was born in northern Ukraine, in the Pale of Settlement where the majority of the Jews of Russia lived and were restricted in movement and rights.



When David reached the age of twelve, his family decided to migrate to Palestine, in the Ottoman Empire, for fear that they would lose their child to the Russian imperial army, since Jewish boys were liable to military conscription from the age of twelve, and would have to serve for 25 years. A quota was imposed that had to be fulfilled by the heads of the Jewish communities, who would pick those they perceived as "non-useful Jews" to give to the empire's army, which meant the poor and the "heretics" or those who had an affinity to the movement of Jewish enlightenment: the Haskala.



With the outbreak of the Crimean War in 1853, the conscription quota of Jewish boys quadrupled, and that's when David Rosenthal's family headed to Safad, Palestine.



Baltic Sea

Prussia

Kingdom of Poland

Berdychiv

Odessa

Black Sea

Austro-Hungarian Empire

Istanbul

Mediterranean Sea

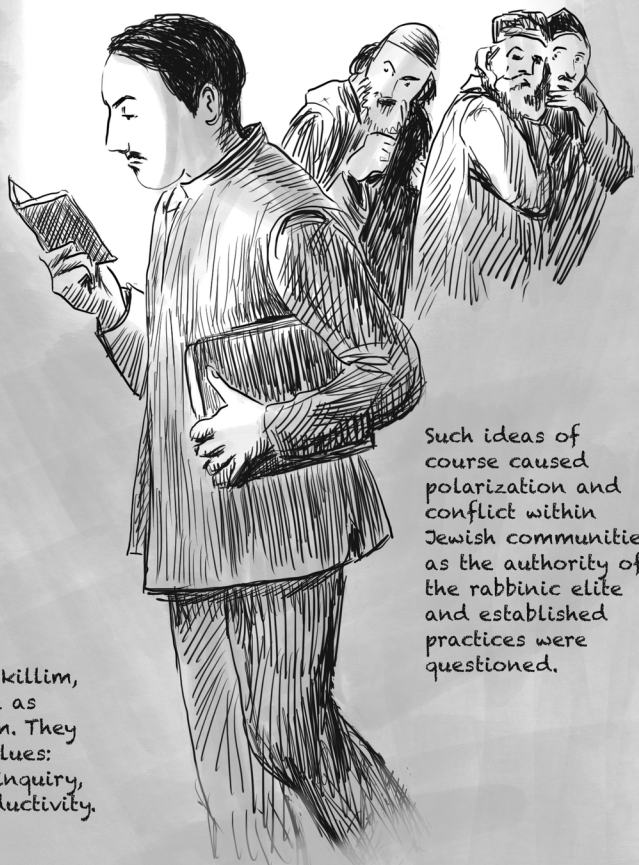
Beirut

Safed

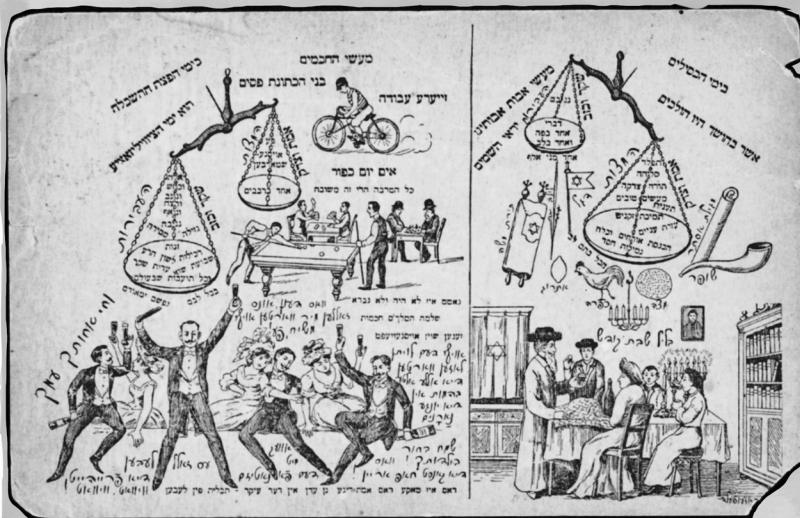
From a young age, David Rosenthal became known for his intellectual pursuits. He had spoken only Yiddish, but taught himself German and French, beside his good knowledge of Hebrew. He pursued secular education in Paris, where he got closer to the Haskala-minded people and organizations.

David came to contribute to Haskala with his writings in notable maskillim journals, which earned him the title of "David der Shreyber" (David the writer, in Yiddish), but it also earned him the persecution of the hasidic community of Safad, which is thought to have precipitated his death at 36, widowing the Safad-born young mother of four, and orphaning five-year old Joseph.

The proponents of Haskala, or the Maskillim, viewed the state of the Jews in Europe as deplorable and in dire need of reform. They advocated the adoption of modern values: rationalism, freedom of thought and inquiry, secular education, and economic productivity.



Such ideas of course caused polarization and conflict within Jewish communities, as the authority of the rabbinic elite and established practices were questioned.



The Haskalah brought forth two opposing movements: that of cultural assimilation, and universalism: the assimilation into the secular political community of the nation-state on the one hand, and on the other hand Zionism, or religious nationalism: the creation of the Jews' own state. These contradictory tendencies born out of the conditions of the Jews in Europe, between nationalism/sectarianism versus universalism and integration played out in the life and times of Rosenthal.

Moses Mendelssohn
(1729-1786)

*Judaism has no tenets of faith
that could not be arrived at
through human reason.*

*Jews must gain a
secular education and
develop the Torah of
Man.*

*Hasidism is responsible for
the cultural backwardness
of the Jews.*

Yosef Perl
(1773-1839)

Naftali Herts Wessely
(1725-1805)

Max Lilienthal
(1815-1882)

*Government reforms to
expose Jews to secular
education are essential*

Yitshak Ber Levinzon
(1788-1860)

*Jews must integrate
within their respective
societies*

*Anti-semitism in Europe is an incurable
disease.. the Jews must have their own
homeland somewhere on the planet*

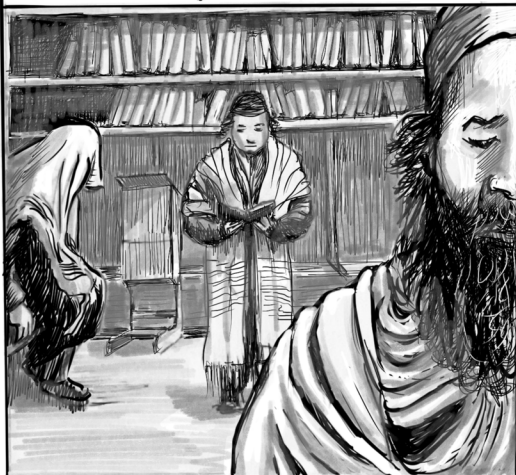
Leon (Lev) Pinsker
(1821-1891)

But this background to his life story and intellectual trajectory was unknown to young Joseph. He was born and grew up in Safad

SAFAD, PALESTINE 1885



He received all his education in the most traditional setting; at a Karlin Hasidic shtiebel





He took the journey to Jerusalem, for three days over the back of mules. But once in the school in the company of the welcoming maskil director, Nassim Bachar, he was intimidated by the Western outfit and shaved heads of the students, and decided that he felt more at home with the Hasidim of Karlin.



His mother had spent years providing for her children by selling bread or going on ships to Eastern Europe to sell souvenirs from the Holy Land. She must have felt disappointed with Joseph's decision to turn down the offer, but, she said, she preferred to see him happy and thriving rather than enlightened and miserable.

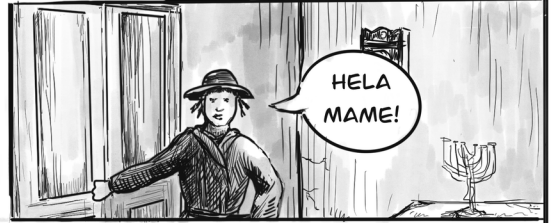
the following year, however, when he was 14, his life changed due to an encounter that caused him to go through a kind of personal enlightenment.

YOUR FATHER 'DAVID DER SHREYBER' WAS AN ACTIVE MASKIL..

One day, a friend of his deceased father recognized him in the crowd, and invited him to spend a few days at his place.



HELA MAME!



HELA YOSEF.. HUNGRY?



DID YOU FIND THE BOXES?



THAT'S THE ONLY ONE WE STILL HAVE..



.. the halukkah system only reinforces dependency among the Jews in Eretz Israel and hinders learning and economic productivity.



1861 שנת ראשונה. (כ"ד ניסן תר"א)

המליץ

המליץ

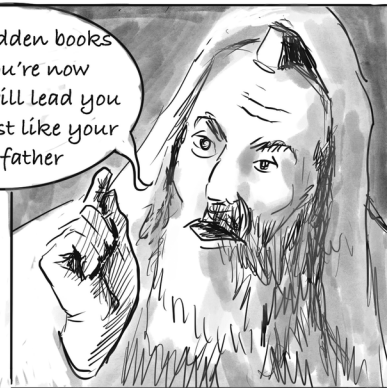
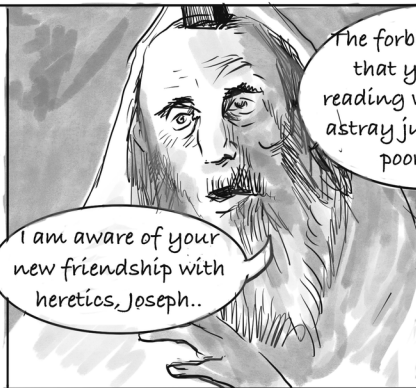
The system reinforces division between the Sephardim and Ashkenazim...The tzedakah would better be entrusted to the state..

30. אב

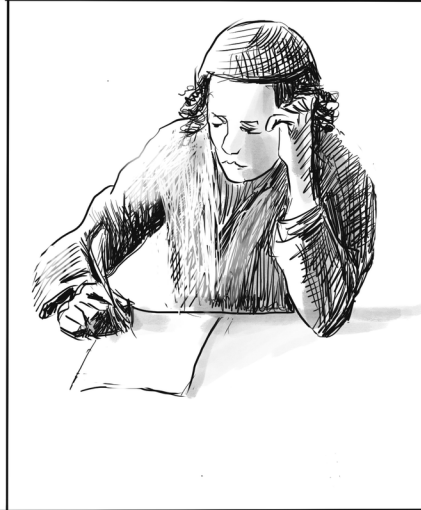
.. and spent on the building of agricultural and other vocational schools for the Jews in Palestine.. David der shreyber



He began to see hasidic prayer and rites in a new light, and found them almost ridiculous



And so Joseph made up his mind..



He sat down and drafted a letter to Nassim Bachar, the director of the Alliance's school, elaborating on why he has become critical of his hasidic education, and why he regrets not having joined the secular school in Jerusalem.

Before he was able to send the letter however, it was stolen! and it reached the hands of the rebbe. Everyone knew Joseph was in trouble. As he entered the Kloiz for the mid-day prayer, all eyes turned and gazed at him, while a senior of the Shtiebel began to reprimand him loudly and mercilessly, calling him a traitor, an uncircumcised heretic, and read out loud Joseph's letter.

At the end of the long tirade, he ordered him out of the Kloiz and to never show his face again! It was then that Joseph and his mother decided he should immediately leave Safad, to Beirut where his sister lived.

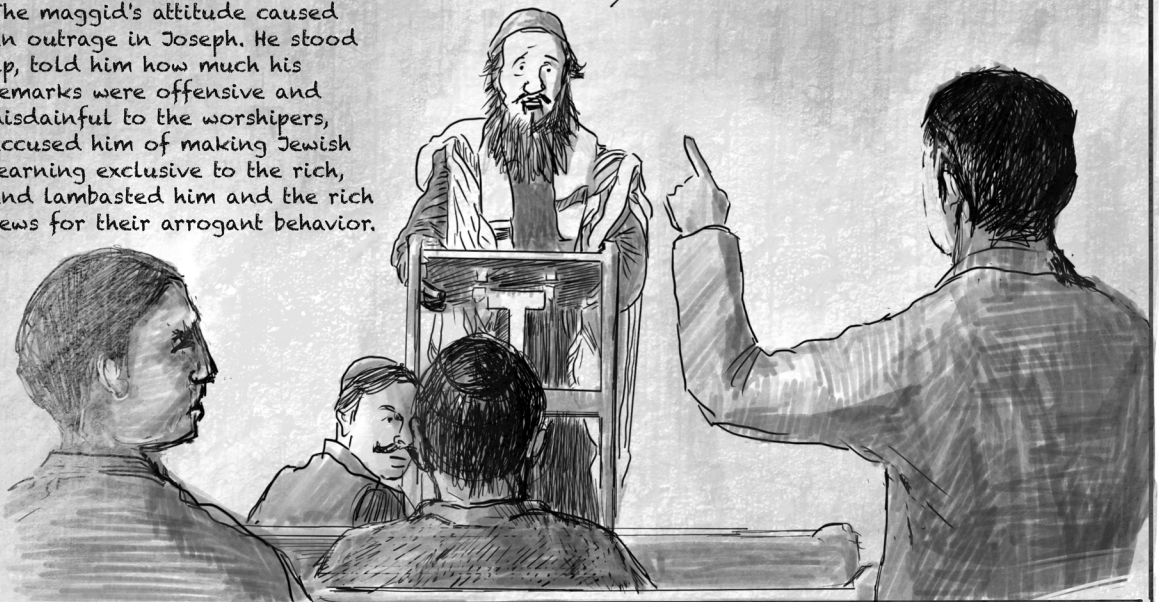


Another influential event happened in Beirut that resolved his ambivalent feelings towards the religious establishment.

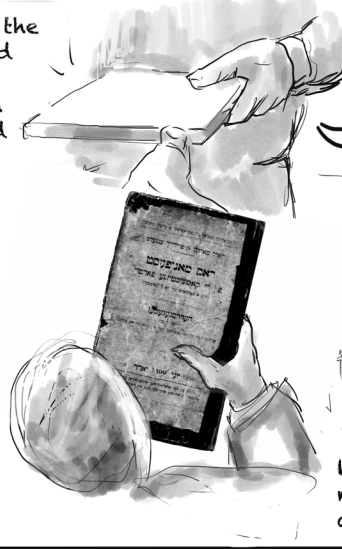
One day he learned that a maggid from Jerusalem was going to give a sermon in the synagogue. Joseph and the poorest of the worshipers arrived early to attend. But the wealthy Jews did not show up on time, and the maggid waited for them to start the sermon.

After a while he gave up and began speaking, only to find them arriving one after the other fifteen minutes into his speech. He stopped, welcomed the rich worshipers, and said he would happily start his sermon all over again, since the rest of the audience likely did not understand a word anyways!

The maggid's attitude caused an outrage in Joseph. He stood up, told him how much his remarks were offensive and disdainful to the worshipers, accused him of making Jewish learning exclusive to the rich, and lambasted him and the rich Jews for their arrogant behavior.



Amid the clamour that followed in the synagogue, a young man approached Joseph and asked him if he was a marxist. It was the first time Joseph had heard of Marx' name. He replied that he didn't know what being a marxist meant

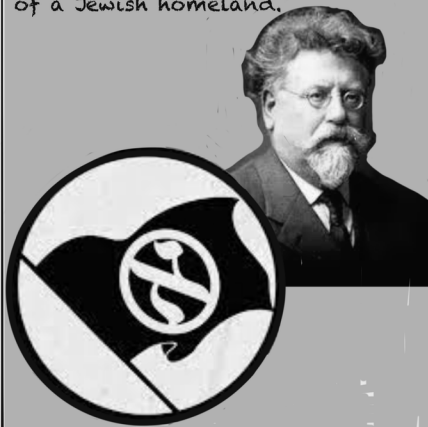
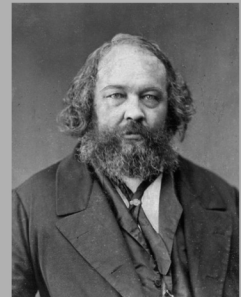


I am Horn, a member of the Jewish Bund. You should get in touch with this organization.. and here, this is Marx's Communist Manifesto..

When Joseph parted with this man, he felt that he was entering a new phase in his life.

After this encounter, he began reading anarchist and communist literature. He plunged in the writings of Marx, Bakunin and Kropotkin. He found "Arbeter Fraynd" or "Friend of the Worker", a London-based Yiddish anarcho-communist paper, and began to correspond with its editor, the famous Rudolph Rocker.

At this time, there was a transnational network of Yiddish anarcho-syndicalists. They opposed the state and national borders, and strove for a society that organized itself without authority, through small cooperative movements. They shared a commitment to secular Yiddish culture, militant atheism, fighting antisemitism and rejecting the idea of a Jewish homeland.



פּעני. דער 3טע

אַרבעטער פֿרײַנד

THE WORKERS FRIEND

אַנאַרכיסטיש-קאָמוניסטישער אַרבעטער
איינפלוסענדיק פֿון די ערשטע ייִדישע-אַנאַרכיסטישע
זייטונג פֿון נײַם טײַטש און פֿאַר

ערוויינט יעדן פֿרייטאָג

32 נײַגעזאַמער יאָרנאַנגאָ נומער

LONDON October 20, No. 32, VOL. XIX, 1905.

ערוויינט יעדן פֿרייטאָג

32 נײַגעזאַמער יאָרנאַנגאָ נומער

ערוויינט יעדן פֿרייטאָג

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ערוויינט יעדן פֿרייטאָג

32 נײַגעזאַמער יאָרנאַנגאָ נומער

ערוויינט יעדן פֿרייטאָג

32 נײַגעזאַמער יאָרנאַנגאָ נומער

After this initiation into radical ideas, Joseph began to hold discussion meetings in his newly opened clockshop in Beirut, until one day, the mufti of Beirut, the father of his friend, warned him that the Ottoman authorities intended to arrest him, because informants reported that he was inciting against God and against the Porte.

Rosenthal thus decided to move to Egypt.

On his way, he stopped over in his hometown, Safad, and visited a number of Jewish settlements.

He was critical of the rising Jewish nationalism, and was convinced—along Jewish bundists and Yiddish anarcho-syndicalists—that the solution to the problem of the Jews globally lay in their socialist struggle, along others, against exploitation, and sectarian and racial hatred. He was also dismayed at how the employees of the Baron de Rothschild had created yet another system of distribution and patronage, and how the functioning of the settlements depended on the exploitation of Arab labor.

Alexandria, Egypt 1898



He arrived in Alexandria as a young man of twenty-seven. Beginning a new life..



Charlotte, his elder daughter, was born the following year. She would become a communist activist and a comrade of her father, and their fates would be intertwined.

..and expecting new life..



Once in Egypt, Joseph became the political companion of "il santo diavolo" (the saint devil), Pietro Vasai, who arrived in Egypt at the same time, after his life had consisted of a series of arrests, expulsions and prison sentences, for his anarchist and socialist activism. He fled to Tunisia first, where he learned the job of typographer and published an anarchist paper, and from there to Egypt, where he carried on with his printing and editing work—thanks to a collection of stolen typesets—and played a pivotal role not just in the anarchist press that flourished in Egypt in the first decade of the 20th century, but in various organizational and syndicalist activities that he undertook with Joseph Rosenthal.

Despite their completely different backgrounds and trajectories, Joseph and Pietro were both anti-state, anti-nationalist, and staunch proponents of self-organization and direct democracy. They wanted to see borders vanish, and strove to stretch networks of transnational solidarity, locally and internationally.

During these years, Joseph seems to have acted as a bridge between Jewish/Yiddish, and Italian anarcho-syndicalists in Alexandria.



Perchè siamo Anarchici - Che cosa vogliamo.

L'INTESA.

Da molto tempo si sentiva il bisogno tra gli anarchici residenti in Egitto, di liberamente intendersi e determinare il metodo tattico per la propaganda delle alte idealità alle quali s'ispirano; perciò furono da tutti accolte e ben accette le proposte fatte dai compagni di Cairo tendenti a indire un convegno nel quale si sarebbero discusse le questioni che in questo paese, maggiormente interessano per tracciare delle norme atte a determinare una propaganda, coerente alle aspirazioni libertarie ma efficace e pratica in modo da interessare e gli operai della mente e quelli del braccio.

Il convegno ebbe luogo in Alessandria domenica 1° Agosto, nella sala del Circolo Ateo, con numeroso concorso di compagni.

La discussione durata quasi 3 ore fu elevata serena ed esauriente.

Furono ad uno ad uno discussi i quesiti presentati dai compagni di Cairo, col questionario che qui sotto riportiamo e furono concretate le relative risposte che riproduciamo; queste approvate alla quasi unanimità stabiliscono i metodi da seguirsi nella propaganda anarchica in questo paese, metodi che pur mantenendo intera la coerenza dei principi, lasciano una razionale libertà di azione tanto agli anarchici aggruppati quanto a quelli che intendono esercitare la propaganda individualmente.

La pubblicazione di un giornale di propaganda libertaria fu assicurata con solide basi.

Siamo lieti di questo avvenimento che ha dissipato molti equivoci e malintesi e che permette agli anarchici di riprendere il loro posto di combattimento nelle palestre ove lottano per un migliore avvenire gli uomini di cuore coscienti e fidenti nell'avvento della Giustizia Sociale.

Gli Anarchici d'Egitto.

L'UNIVERSITA' POPOLARE LIBERA
e gli operai.



ANNO II.

Alessandria d'Egitto, 11 Aprile 1903.

N. 34.

Abbonamenti:

EGITTO:	Un anno.	P.T. 20
	Sei mesi	» 10
	Tre mesi	» 5
ESTERO:	Un anno.	Fr. 10
	Sei mesi	» 5

Una P. C. il Numero.

Inserzioni:

Solo in quarta pagina; prezzi a
convenirsi

Pagamenti anticipati

L'OPERAIO

PERIODICO SETTIMANALE

Lavoratori di tutto il mondo, unitevi!

C. MARX.

Indirizzo:

Giornale L'Espresso

ALESSANDRIA - EGITTO.

I manoscritti, anche se non pubblicati, non si restituiscono.

Degli anonimi non si tien conto.

Tutti gli operai possono essere nostri collaboratori: noi non domandiamo lavori letterari, ma IDEE e FATTI.

LA COSCIENZA INDIGENA

Lo sciopero dei vetturini dichiaratosi in questi giorni in Alessandria ha un particolare significato.

Si noti prima di tutto che tutti i vetturini sono indigeni, i quali non hanno nessuna educazione intellettuale e sociale. Essi ignorano ciò che fanno in Europa i fratelli dello stesso loro mestiere ogniquale volta i loro diritti sono lesi. Ignorano i progressi che per l'istruzione hanno conseguito tutti i lavoratori del mondo, se non nei fatti, nel concetto d'intendere la loro situazione.

Ebbene, questa massa massimista di vetturini ignoranti si mette in isciopero per le multe che gli agenti di polizia infliggono loro e per esigere migliori trattamenti dai loro padroni che li sfruttano indegnamente, e per stabilire una tariffa che possa garantirli di fronte al pubblico. Qui infatti l'agente di polizia è tiranno coi vetturini: egli è il loro naturale nemico perché quando gli impone una multa gli fa intendere pure che mediante una piccola mancia data a lui, la multa gli viene risparmiata senz'altro. Qualunque cittadino ha potuto constatare talvolta inutilmente

no, con la sconfitta dei vetturini perché essi hanno dovuto cedere alla fame e alla miseria; ma ciò non significa che il loro aiuto non valga assolutamente nulla e che non possa risultare sintomatico di un atteggiamento ribelli in avvenire. Sarebbe quello di un sciopero spontaneo, che si forma la società appena destatisi a mostrare l'innanità di un'opera inutile; e strarlo a poco a poco a ragionamenti. Allora alla rimanifestazione della stessa classe formata si limiterà

Noi sullo sciopero
detto e ridetto in que
abbiamo le nostre idee chiare e ripe-
tiamo che esso non
stione dell'emancipazione dei lavora-
tori.

Noi non possiamo però fare a meno, *in Egitto*, di tenere in una giusta considerazione il solo atto dello sciopero. Poiché fa piacere a vedere gente che si ritiene comunemente refrattaria a qualunque protesta e a qualunque reclamo — fare l'una e l'altro, d'un tratto, improvvisamente, meravigliando un'intera cittadinanza ab-

Pochi, dotati di forze superiori a quelle della generalità dei viventi, sono riusciti ad abbattere i più devoti, a renderli schiavi, a proclamare la loro sovranità. Essi si appropriano della ricchezza sociale, si impadroniscono del prodotto frutto del lavoro altrui, del consenziente di tutti. D'allora, la differenza di condizione, la divisione in classi, o per colore, o per razza. All feel this

the same grief; all have their own well-being." *Il che prima-*

Il Capitale, la grande montagna che raffigura e reintegra tutte le forze umane, si rende fattore di rivoluzione

da e abbiamo da sperare bene. Noi non andiamo dunque errati dicendo che occorre spiegare le ragioni del sentimento di fratellanza fra gli uomini come fattore di civiltà.

[illegible]

L'uomo poi ha bisogni individuali di tal genere che talora si vede costretto, per salvare sé stesso da certa, lenta soppressione, di non curarsi del suo simile; anzi di regolarsi qualche volta in modo che il suo simile pensi e muoia di fame per lui. Avviene questo nella società d'oggi; ma avviene perché c'è la lotta per l'esistenza, cioè la negazione di ogni sentimento di fratellanza.

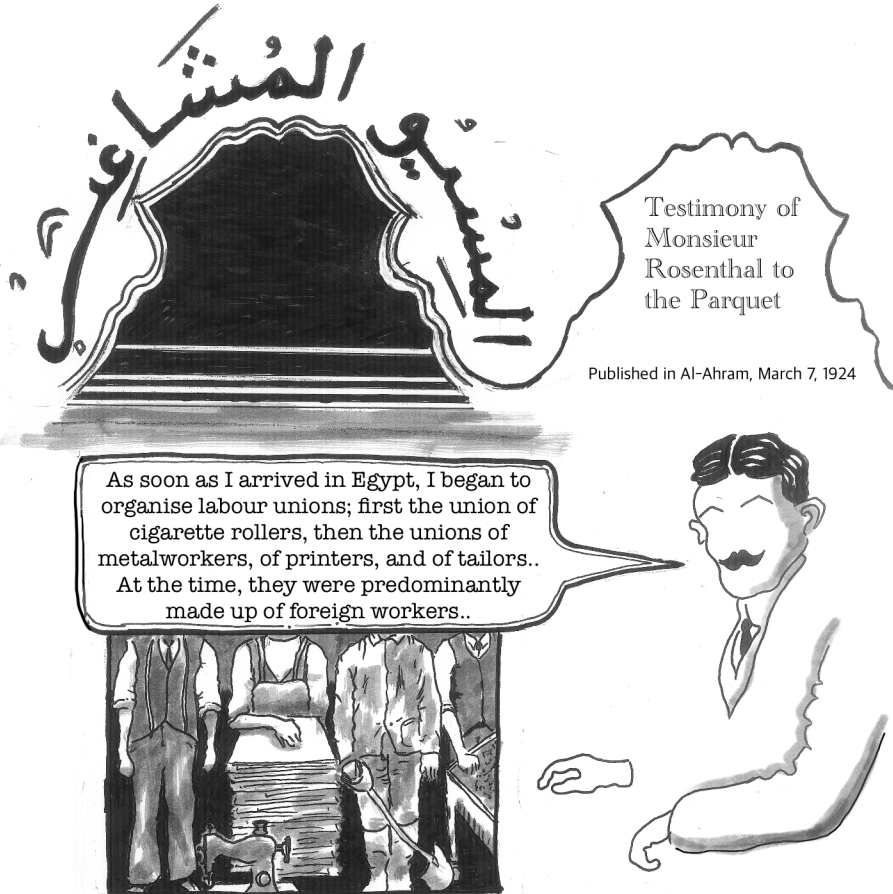
Rosenthal's syndicalism among indigenous workers began in his workplace, when he encouraged the Egyptian workers at Zusmann's jewellery shop to organize and demand an eight-hour working day, and a holiday on labor day.

The shop owner, a fellow Jew, offered Joseph a differential treatment to stop him from inciting the workers, but Rosenthal did not give up the collective demand.

In another instance he threatened to resign if an indigenous worker, who was fired without indemnity or prior notice, was not reinstated.

It was common practice in colonial Egypt that factory owners would appeal to communal or national identification among workers to break strikes and worker solidarity. Rosenthal was aware of this, and it was exactly that which he wished to struggle against.

He then began to hold "circles of self-education" for workers in his home, and from these meetings the seeds of several syndicates were born.



Published in Al-Ahram, March 7, 1924

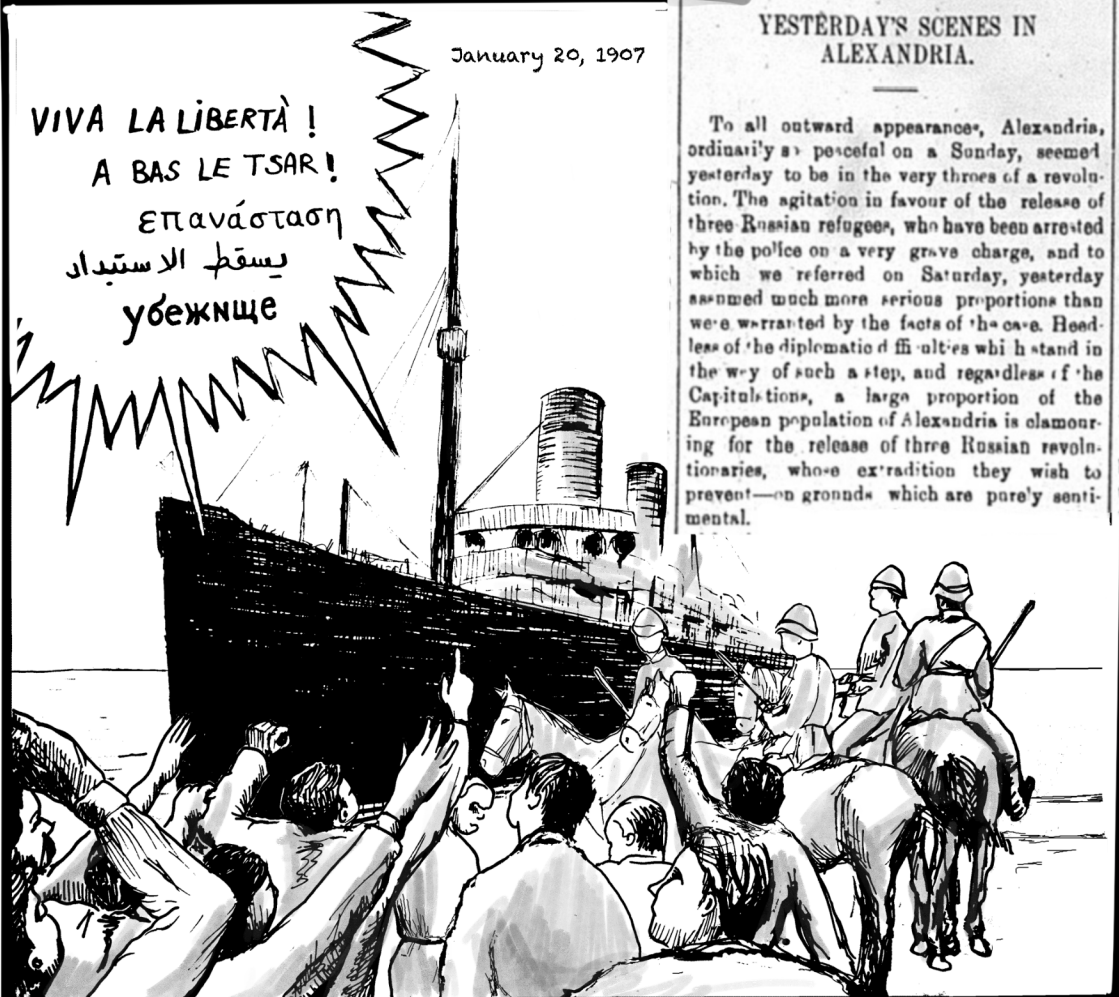
Rosenthal's name also figured in instances of significant mass mobilization in Alexandria, in solidarity with victims of state tyranny and clerical oppression across borders, such as the large-scale demonstrations against the extradition of Russian anarcho-syndicalists and members of the Black Sea Sailors Union in 1907 and in 1913, and such as the mobilization against the execution of Francisco Ferrer in 1909.



January 20, 1907

VIVA LA LIBERTÀ!
A BAS LE TSAR!

ΕΠΑΝΑΣΤΑΣΗ
يسقط الاستبداد
убежище



YESTERDAY'S SCENES IN ALEXANDRIA.

To all outward appearance, Alexandria, ordinarily so peaceful on a Sunday, seemed yesterday to be in the very throes of a revolution. The agitation in favour of the release of three Russian refugees, who have been arrested by the police on a very grave charge, and to which we referred on Saturday, yesterday assumed much more serious proportions than were warranted by the facts of the case. Headless of the diplomatic difficulties which stand in the way of such a step, and regardless of the Capitulations, a large proportion of the European population of Alexandria is clamouring for the release of three Russian revolutionaries, whose extradition they wish to prevent—on grounds which are purely sentimental.

He thus focused on organizing the labor movement, forming socialist discussion groups and eventually organising the Egyptian socialist/communist party. His Confédération Générale des Travailleurs (CGT) gathered a membership of about 20,000 workers in 1923, two years after its formation. And despite the reluctance of nationalist heads of worker unions to join it, it played an important role in organizing labor action in the period of its operation.

(الاهرام) الاثنين ٢٩ أغسطس سنة ١٩٢٦

بيان الحزب الاشتراكي

المصري

في تلك الآونة التي تصف فيها النظم الرأس مالية
الرفية بحجة بني الانسان وأرواحهم وعقولهم
وجهودهم وبنت النظم والمباني الاشتراكية في
الأمم المتحدة المعذبة لأغواذ الانسانية واعاثت من بطش
القوي النظم وعقبت غابات العدالة الطبيعية من تأييد
عواطف الناس والسلام في المجتمع الانساني

The manifesto linked capitalism to colonialism, and stated as its first objective, the liberation of Egypt and the entire Nile valley from colonialism.



**Manifesto of the Egyptian Socialist
Party to the Manual and Brain
Workers of the World.**

The brutal and aggressive tone in which the British militarists and colonial officials have replied to the sacred demands of the Egyptian people have opened the eyes of the most naive and credulous among us. The veil has been torn and the hideous features of our oppressors have been revealed in all their ugliness.

With pride and dignity we hurl back the defi thrown in the face of the Egyptian people by the British militarists and imperialists. Four years of foreign occupation with all its military terrorism and its arbitrary laws of persecution have not been able to weaken for a single instant our firm resolution to fight and to make all the necessary sacrifices for the conquest of our independence.

1919 demonstrated to the world and to our oppressors the vitality of our people which did not recoil before any menace to proclaim on high its right to national life and liberty. It is not by diplomatic steps and negotiations between ministers or delegations which do not represent the wishes of the people that independence can be obtained. Only the workers and peasants, conscious and organized, can win it.

The Socialist ideal which is the expression of the renaissance of the peoples of the world has appeared on the scene of Egyptian political life. The Egyptian Socialist Party will place itself in the vanguard and in the first ranks of battle for the demanding of our rights to complete national independence, freed from all imperialist and capitalist enslavement, domestic as well as foreign.

The Egyptian Socialist Party, standard-bearer of the proletariat and party of the class-struggle, declares that in the union of the entire Egyptian people in its supreme fight against the oppressive power of British imperialism it will integrally maintain its Socialist program and will not renounce its struggle against the Egyptian capitalist tyrants and oppressors, accomplices and associates of the tyrannic foreign domination.

Egyptian intellectual proletariat will cease all collaboration, of whatever nature it may be, with our oppressors and whoever will adopt a contrary attitude will be a traitor to the higher interests of the people and of the holy national cause.

The Egyptian proletarian workers and peasants, extends a fraternal hand to the world proletariat and particularly to the proletariat of Great Britain, so that together they may mount to the assault of the imperialist citadel which under its weight suffocates not only the enslaved peoples of the Orient, but also pitilessly exploits all the laboring and producing masses of Europe. The peoples of the Orient count on the assistance and support of the world proletariat in their struggle against the common enemy.

The struggle for the conquest of independence on the part of the peoples of the Orient is also a struggle bearing a clear socialist character. The world proletariat is enslaved and ex-

Let the diplomats plot and intrigue and betray the interests of the masses. We, the proletariat, are ready for a long and bitter struggle, are forming our battle-lines, are organizing our forces in the trade-unions and are bringing together the workers of the city and country. Let the intellectuals go to the peasants to create a united political and economic front which will at the same time act as a counter-balance to the influence of the bourgeoisie.

Without hesitation and without fear let us group ourselves around the banner of the International for the final struggle against our only enemy, British imperialism, which is to-day the highest expression of world capitalism. On the victory of Socialism and on the seizure of power by the proletariat depends the independence and emancipation of the peoples of the Orient. And only the indissoluble union of the workers of the West and of the East will vanquish our common enemy — capitalist imperialism.

Long live independent Egypt!
Long live the International of the workers!
Long live the Social Revolution!

The Egyptian Socialist Party.

Cairo, 22 December 1921.



In January 1922, another manifesto was published in Inprecor, the organ of the Third Internationale. This one was more expressly nationalist, focusing on the struggle against "foreign occupation" and vowing that the Egyptian Socialist Party will place itself in the vanguard of the national battle for complete independence, using terms like "the holy national cause" and the motto "long live independent Egypt". The manifesto took pains to make the claim that both socialism and the cause of national independence were in line, and that the anti-colonial struggle in the orient "bears a clear socialist character".

It is not certain that Rosenthal is the author of this manifesto. But it reflects his own shift towards accommodating nationalism with communism. He personally backed the Wafd nationalist party and its leader Saad Zaghlul, and, in a meeting with the Wafd's Makram Ebeid, Rosenthal is said to have suggested the mobilization of the workers through his CGT to oppose Adly's premiership in favor of the Wafd.

But Rosenthal's nationalist turn did not spare him the fate of being increasingly regarded as a "misyu" and a "khawaga", associated with European colonialists and those who benefited from colonial privileges and hierarchies.

He was perceived as European although he had never set foot in Europe, and never stepped out of the Ottoman Empire. He also did not benefit from the capitulations, since he did not possess any European subject status. He was an Ottoman subject by virtue of the 1869 Ottoman nationality law, and he would qualify to being considered Egyptian according to the turn-of-the-century decrees that regulated this question based on birth and duration of domicile in Egypt. At the time of the founding of the Egyptian Communist Party, and throughout most of the 1920s, an Egyptian nationality law had not existed, and these old decrees regulated the question of subject status.

But Rosenthal's cosmopolitanism, his speaking several languages, his being an Ashkenazi Jew, in the Jewish trade of clockmaking and jewelery, and his connections to the various European communities, were sufficient markers that made him a khawaga or a misyu in the eyes of some Arabic-speaking Egyptians.

On various occasions, al-Ahram stressed on Rosenthal's foreignness and distinguished him from "the nationals" (al-wataniyyin).

The first instance was when he sought to compete in the Alexandria municipal elections for the Egyptian seat in 1920. Al-Ahram exclaimed, "we must tell him to stop!" "there are many Egyptian notables who are more entitled than you, to hold the only available seat for nationals in the council!" and invited him to run in the elections as a Russian, arguing that no Egyptian would vote for a European, even if a socialist voice in the council will be beneficial for the people.

The second instance was when the paper announced in the following year his intent to form an Egyptian Socialist Party, and argued that Rosenthal's socialism was not suited to national conditions, ethics, customs and interests, and called on "everyone working for the interest of the country to monitor such a party".

In both instances, Rosenthal was striving to claim membership in the Egyptian nation and to participate in its civic and political life as a citizen, and in both instances al-Ahram's discourse focused on his foreignness, and denied him this claim.

لإعادة تعليمهم لأهم الأختصاصات أفلة عددنا منهم . وإهم ما يجب لفت
 نظر الجمهور الوطني إلى مسألة الميسو روزنتال تاجر
 الخمر هرات للتقدم الانتخاب بمادي اشتراكية . إن
 هذه المادي جذاه وحده لو استطاع الرجل أن
 يأخذ مرشحا روسيا كما كان يجب أن يكون .
 أما هو فيقدم حتى الآن بصفة مرشح وطني فيجب
 أن يقال له قف فإن عندنا من هو أحق منك
 بالجلوس على الكرسي الوحيد الذي نحمل في البلدية
 للوطنيين . وما من وطني في الاشتراكية يعطي
 صوته في الانتخابات روزنتال أو غيره من الميسو
 بك انطيني أو من كان مرشحا مثله من وجهاء
 الوطنيين

الحزب الاشتراكي المصري

بسمي الميسو روزنتال منذ أمد بعيد لنا في
 حزب اشتراكي في هذه البلاد وبدأ عمله بالمطالبة
 بحقوق المستأجرين ثم بتعداد النقابات مع مواصلة
 السعي لانقاذ جماعه من الوطنيين بأن عاشوه في
 مشرعه وقد سمح بأن اتفق الدكتور علي افتد
 الثاني بأن يكون سكرتير الفرع الوطني كما يكون
 هو ذاته أي روزنتال سكرتير الفرع الفرنسي
 والاشتراكي وكما يكون الخواجا يريدين سكرتير
 الفرع اليوناني ولا شك بأن هذا الحزب سيعمل
 برنامجا ولا شك بأن هذا البرنامج سيتضمن وعودا
 طيبة ولكن الوعد شيء والمعمل شيء آخر
 وحالة البلد الاجتماعية تقضي علينا وعلى كل
 عامل في مصلحته برقابة حزب كهذا لا لانا نكره
 النعالي والذاهب الاشتراكية السليمة العملية . بل لانا
 نكره النظريات المتطرفة التي تقضي بالطفرة ونحن
 نود التطور رويدا رويدا
 ولا نعرف مذهب الدكتور العناني من هذه
 الوجهة ولا ماهي الاشتراكيته . وهل هي متطرفة
 أو عملية ولكننا نعرف شيئا من مذهب الميسو
 روزنتال ونعرف شيئا كما يسطر رؤساء النقابات
 الوطنيين فنعرف أنها اشتراكي متطرف . وقد يتجاوز
 حدود التطرف . فهل الدكتور العناني من مذهبهم ؟
 إن لكل أمة أخلاقها وعبادتها ومناقبها وما
 يصح أن يجري في إيطاليا وألمانيا ورومانيا - مثلا -
 أن يتبع في مصر

To add to this, Rosenthal was attacked from within the party..

Although he was working along an Egyptian effendi, Husni al-Urabi, to arabize the party's central committee, becoming himself the "head of the European section of the party", an ideological fissure occurred in mid-1922, between the moderate intellectuals of the Cairo section and the radical tendency of the Alexandria section, but it was formulated in nationalist terms by the moderates..

Salama Musa attacked Rosenthal and his steering the party towards communism on the pages of al-Ahram..

And despite the defense by another Egyptian member of the Cairo group, Muhammad 'Abdalla 'Anan..



Rosenthal is jeopardizing Egypt's claim for independence.. our loyalty to Egypt must be stronger than our loyalty to socialism!

Musa's brand of socialism is English reactionary socialism! It is national and selfish socialism.. The Egyptian working class will acquire strength from joining the Third Internationale and from solidarity with the workers of the world.

Egyptian capitalists are Egyptians after all !!
Rosenthal is fomenting enmity between social classes in Egypt! He is harming Egypt's national interests.



.. Musa's line of argument echoed well with the anti-socialist and anti-communist tendencies of the Egyptian elite and the conservative press.

At the same time, the British were working up a plan within the Egyptian government to get rid of Rosenthal.

The Acting Director of British Intelligence, Humphrey Beaman, together with the British director of public security within the Egyptian Ministry of Interior, and the British Foreign Office, contemplated different ways to deport Rosenthal without "raising dust in England".

The British adviser to the Ministry of Interior wrote a special note about him summing up his reported mischief since 1901, when "he came to the notice of the police as a rabid and fanatical anarchist spreading subversive propaganda amongst the local Jews", that "he figured prominently in the 1913 extradition case of Adamovitch", that he was "reported by the refugees administration as being the instigator of intrigue and troubles amongst Russian Jews" and noting his prominent role in the strikes of 1920 including the shop renters', the tailors' and the barbers' employees strikes.

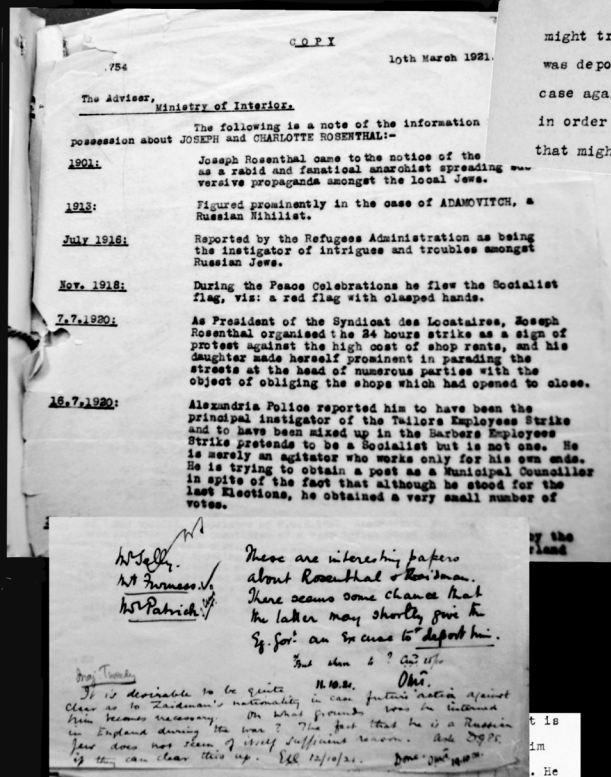


The links he had with various socialist groups and labour organizations impressed British officials, to the extent that they reiterated that the deportation of Rosenthal and his daughter would seriously affect the prospects of radicalization in the country. One despatch argued that "communism in Egypt is a 'one man show' and that 'one man' is Rosenthal".

General Clayton from the War Office cited the benefits of deporting Rosenthal, either by the Egyptian government or "by us under martial law".

Rosenthal's national origin was debated in the correspondences, and the British wished to find evidence that he was Russian to legitimate his deportation. When they failed, Graves, the Acting Director General of Public Security, argued that the fact that he was a local subject "would not legally stand in the way of his deportation".

But the attempt to deport him, would have to wait until the Wafd was in power, and until it launched its fierce anti-communist campaign during its first government, in coordination with the British..



might try and raise dust in ENGLAND if ROSENTHAL was deported and we should therefore require a good case against him before taking any such action in order to have a complete answer on any enquiries that might be made. Dr. Granville also seemed to



W. Selly. This is a definite case establishing Mr Rosenthal as agent here for a Simple Bolshevik and communist association. He is attempting to introduce subversive literature, especially for Egypt & certainly to foment trouble & disturb public security. It seems enough to warrant action on the part of the Egyptian Government or by us under Martial Law or his removal might leave - at any rate temporarily - the growing communist party in this country without an organising head.

that these activities are practically unanimous in indicating It would appear almost true to say that Communism and allied movements in Egypt are a "one man show" and that the "one man" is Rosenthal.

signed: N. W. Clayton
for DIRECTOR GENERAL.

But before this blow hit Rosenthal, another drama was unfolding: a plot to exclude him was being prepared from within the party ranks, from his closest associates.

In a party meeting, following the return of al-Urabi from the fourth congress of the Comintern in Moscow, in December 1922, it was claimed that..



One of the Comintern's conditions for the Egyptian party to become a member is Rosenthal's expulsion from the party!

This was Yehiel Kossol, also known as Avigdor, a Soviet agent sent to Egypt to aid in the formation of the Egyptian Communist Party, and who had become Rosenthal's son-in-law by marrying his daughter Charlotte..

Historian Rami Ginat shows through a reading of the Comintern archives, that the plot was al-Urabi's and Avigdor's and that the Comintern had nothing to do with it. In anycase, the decision was a great shock to Rosenthal. His expulsion could either be a friends' betrayal or a Comintern distrust, both were very hard to accept and tormented him.

He attempted relentlessly to have the party and the Comintern reconsider the decision but his letters were met with silence from the Comintern and scorn from al-Urabi, who questioned Rosenthal's integrity on the pages of al-Ahram, and, in his letters to the Comintern, described him as a bourgeois and as insignificant to communism.

Al-Madani, a party member whom al-Urabi wanted to appoint as bursar in place of Rosenthal, defended him and even submitted his resignation in protest. He wrote to a Comintern leading member, Georgeo Safarov:



Rosenthal's expulsion is a great loss for the party .. he is a very useful and active member, a man who has been for over thirty years interested, heart and soul, in the communist and labor movement in Egypt and abroad..

He has been regarded in Egypt as the keystone of the communist movement... he has done in Egypt what no communist could have done anywhere else..

Rosenthal is loved and trusted by the working class in Egypt. They would, and have indeed begun to, abandon the party after learning of his dismissal.

Rosenthal's figure in Egypt, at present and in the past, is closely connected with the entire history of the communist and labor movement in Egypt. It is only thanks to his untiring efforts, energy, activity and devotion that an Egyptian Socialist Party has come into being, and ever since the founding of this party, the most onerous burden of its existence has been thrown on his shoulders.

In the tensions that ensued, Rosenthal was losing connection with his beloved daughter in the Soviet Union. She had left for Moscow in 1922 to study at the University of the Toilers of the East, and was joined by Avigdor. Rosenthal wrote him a letter:

I received no letters from Charlotte. Did anything happen to her? Please update me at once. You know very well how deeply I am attached to her, and her absence hurts me a lot. What am I to blame for, to make me suffer so much?

My worries and suffering greatly affect my activity for the party. These feelings also affect my ability to express my views in detail in this letter.



Perhaps he was feeling that his beliefs were then costing him the dearest of all... He wrote another letter to the deputy head of the Eastern Secretariat of the Comintern, when Charlotte was sent to Tashkent by the organisation and news from her had ceased again:



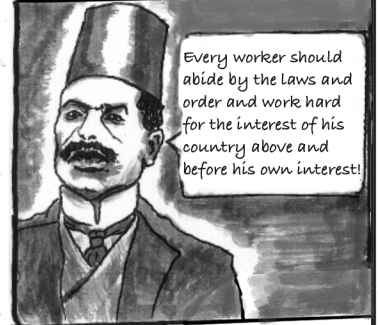
I particularly feel desperate because Charlotte is not just my daughter, physically and materially, but also my soul, my thought and my spirit. She symbolizes my ideal and my hope. When I sent her to Moscow, the crib of the proletariat's revolution, the center of social regeneration, I believed that through her, I would be able to merge with the masses, who were marching towards the conquest of a new world, a world of justice and happiness for the exploited and productive workers. I regard her as the one who would continue, refine and accomplish my life's work that I modestly commenced in Egypt about a quarter of century ago. My work has become more intensive in recent years, owing to the encouragement and influence that I received from the Russian revolution and the Comintern..

The dismissal from the party, and the abandonment by the Comintern, did not spare Rosenthal the plot to deport him, when the Wafd cracked down on the party.

At the end of 1923, the CGT took part in a wave of labor mobilizations which culminated in the workers' occupation of the National Spinning Company and the Egin Oil factories in Alexandria. The factory occupations coincided with the electoral victory of the Wafd in January 1924 and the rise of its charismatic leader, Saad Zaghlul to premiership.

But the Wafd and its leadership perceived the labor mobilizations as a campaign to discredit its new government and the nationalist cause of independence.. it would work side by side with the British to crush the socialist and labor movements

The entire leadership of the nationalist movement was made up of large- and medium- landowners who wished to see no change in the socio-economic status quo, and focused on the question of political independence.



Every worker should abide by the laws and order and work hard for the interest of his country above and before his own interest!

Only one month had passed since the rise of the first elected national government to power, when Zaghlul took action. To end the occupation of the factories, he ordered the under-secretary of state, and Keown-Boyd, the head of the European department within the Ministry of Interior, to proceed to Alexandria with a battalion of Egyptian infantry, and "to show a firm front".

The delegation reported back that the strikes were "engineered by the communist party" rather than stemmed from real grievances.



Who taught you such methods of occupying the factory? The communists??

Well..we've seen the workers in Milan occupy their factories to demand their legitimate rights before the rise of Mussolini

If you show respect to the property of others and leave by your own will, you will be treated as people who are faithful to the law and to the homeland..

..but if you refuse to, and insist on violating the property of others, you will be treated as disobedient outlaws!



A fierce crackdown ensued on the Egyptian Communist Party and the CGT. Leaders and suspected members were arrested, and twenty foreign party members and workers involved in the strikes were deported. Wafdist leaders and union heads loyal to the Wafd, attacked the communists as foreign troublemakers who tried to mislead patriotic Egyptian workers.

التحقيق مع الشيوعيين

شهادة المسير روزنتال

تاريخ نشأة حركة الشمال والاشتراكية في مصر

الاشتراكية في مصر - المراسل - عضوا في اللجنة الادارية والاشغال بعض فروع الامم الخمسون - قلا في رسالة ان المسير للتحزب في الاقاليم - تم تعيين ان اللجنة العاصمة جوف روزنتال دعي لنادية الشهادة امام المحاكم لظهور خلاصا طابعا لمهمة كذه في حين صاحب المال النائب العمومي في قضية تان فوم الاسكتلندية بالعموم فلة عدا أعضاء الشيوعية التي لا زال تحت التحقيق في النيابة يظهر كفاءة تقوى نفاذ المراكز الادارية وقد

After the arrest of the Egyptian leadership of the party, the prosecution summoned Rosenthal as a witness.

At the court, he answered the Parquet's questions about the difference between socialism and communism, and explained that the factory occupations stemmed from the workers' desperate situation. His testimony was published in full in al-Ahram, and the paper commented that his testimony was an important historical document.

Two days later, he sent a personal statement to be published in al-Ahram..

فضيحة الحركة الشيوعية

بيان من السيد روزنثال

الحركة الشيوعية

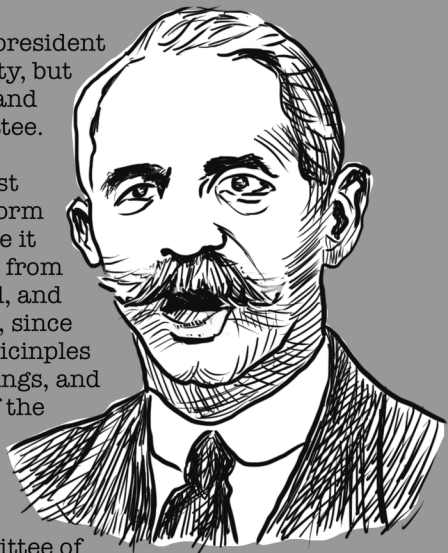
الاسكندرية في ١١ مارس - لمراسل
الاهرام الحصري - لا زال التحقيق في
فضيحة الشيوعية. نسمع لدى النيابة العمومية
وحي في كل يوم تستدعي افرادا لم يسبق لها
استدعائهم في هذه القضية. وقد استندعت
اليوم التحقيق موفداً من مصلحة الجمارك
وصاحب منزل جازر في غيط العنب وبطل
احمال ومن نقابة الزمام الجراء، وكاتب بعض وكلاء
النقابة فتبين منازل اولئك الرجال وضبط ما
يوجد عندهم من اوراق الشيوعية.
وقد تلقينا اليوم من السيد روزنثال بياناً
يشي فيه ما قيل في بعض الصحف عن اتصاله
من الشيوعية ومبادئها ويحول فيه ما ياتي:
« روت في بعض الصحف ملاحظات
وتعليقات تنسب لي خصوصاً في وقت تهاجم
هالي النائب المصري عن الحركة الشيوعية
في مصر وقد رأيت ذلك يستدعي بعض التصحيح
اولاً - اني لم اكن قط رئيساً للحزب
الاشتراكي المصري ولكني اشركت في تأسيسه
وكنت احد اعضاء لجنته التنفيذية.
ثانياً - ان الحرب الاشتراكي المصري
لم يتحول في الحقيقة الى حزب شيوعي لانه
كان منه تأسسه حزباً شيوعياً يسمى بالامس
الاشتراكي وقد اعترف بمبادئ الشيوعية
وتعاليمها ووافق على خطط الدولية الشيوعية.
اما تسمية الاحم فقدمت وفقاً لطلب اللجنة
المركزية للشيوعية الدولية وكان ذلك شرطاً
 لقبول الحزب في هذه الدولية
ثالثاً - انني كنت لا علاقة لي بالحزب
الشيوعي الحالي فذلك ليس ثانياً من فلاحين
الحزب الاشتراكي المصري (الذي لم يلائم
غير اسمه) ولكني ارجمت على ذلك على اثر
وشايات ومطاع وجيهاً الى بعض المتطفلين
على السياسة من الذين دخلوا الحزب ووصلوا
الى فصل منه فتجسست حتى لا اوجد اقساما
في وحدة الحزب ولا اظهر ثاني اعمل ضد حركة
الاجتماعية امطارها بمبادئها
رابعاً - ما كنت ولن اكون ابداً ومن
اولئك الاعضاء ذوي الظروف الذين
يتكلمون اليوم بحاجة ما عهده بالامس
فقد كنت وما زلت ولا ازال حتى آخر نسمة
من حياتي شيوعياً كاملاً وتخلصاً اخلاصاً تاماً
لفضيلة البروليتاريا
خامساً - بالرغم اني اظهرت للجنة المركزية
المصرية الشيوعي المصري من تلك الفترة وما
ارتكبه من الاغلاط انضمت مني تضامناً
واطالبت بتصحيح من المسؤولية
وتزهد السيد روزنثال على ما تقدم بعض
آراءه افكار الشيوعية وتأثيرها في الشرق ونحو
ذلك كما لا يتدخل فيه بريد انفضاحه للجمهور
للمناسبة ما كتب عنه في بعض الصحف.

"Due to misunderstandings that stemmed from my recent testimony to the Egyptian parquet about the communist movement in Egypt, I deemed it necessary to make some corrections.

First, I have never been the president of the Egyptian Socialist Party, but I contributed in founding it, and I sat on its executive committee.

Second, the Egyptian Socialist Party in truth did not transform into a communist party, since it has always been communist, from the moment it was conceived, and socialist only in name. It has, since its beginning, adopted the principles of communism and its teachings, and subscribed to the schemes of the Communist Internationale.

The name change, to The Egyptian Communist Party took place upon the demand of the central committee of the Comintern, as a condition to accept its membership.

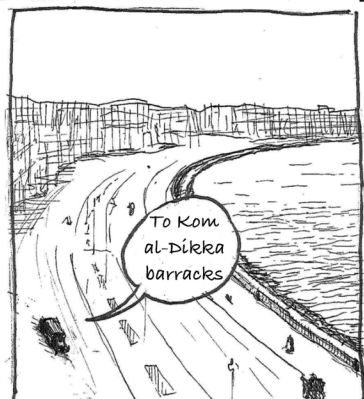
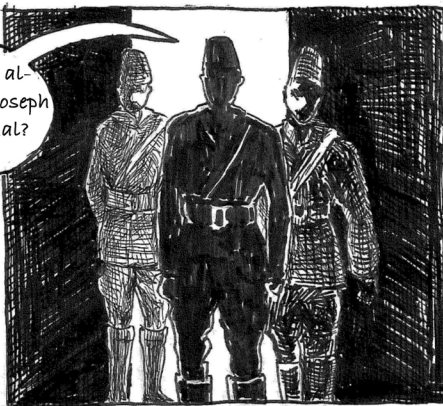
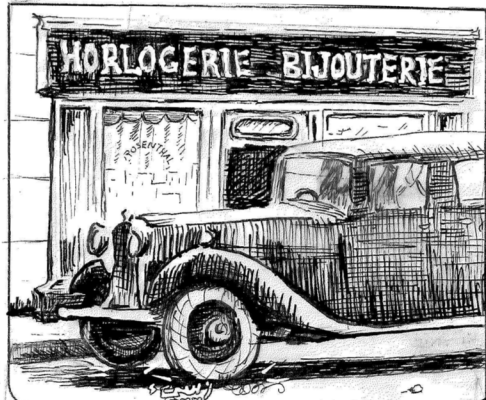
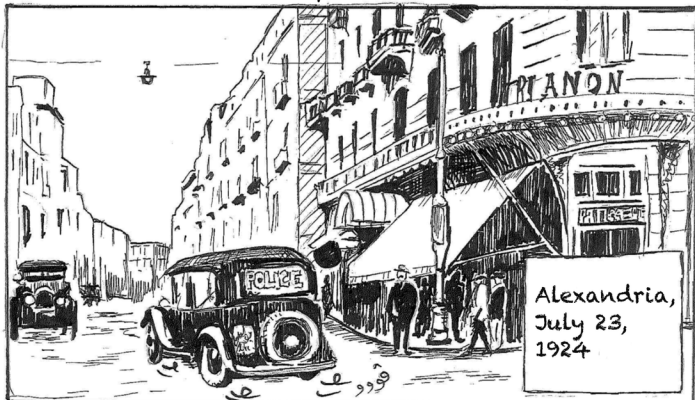


Third, if I no longer have a connection to the current communist party, that is not because the Egyptian Socialist Party vanished, only its name has, but I was forced to quit it due to tears and stabs directed at me by intruders to politics, who have entered the party and managed to dismiss me from it, following which I have decided to resign, so as not to create divisions in the party's unity, and in order not to cause any harm to a social movement whose values I believe in.

Fourth, I never was, and will never be, one of those influential members, who would blatantly deny today what they had worshipped yesterday. **For I have been, and I still am, and I will always be, until my last breath, a communist wholly loyal to the cause of the proletariat.**

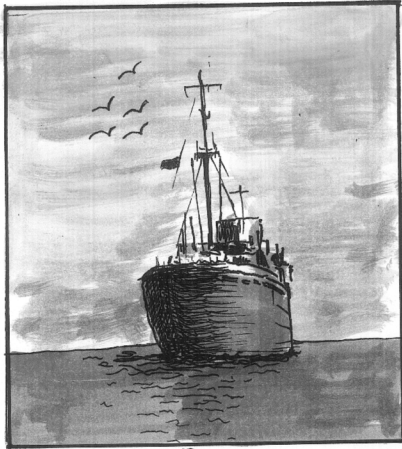
Fifth, despite what the central committee of the Egyptian Communist Party has shown of lack of experience, and despite the errors it has committed, **I stand in complete solidarity with its members, and I demand my share of responsibility.**

After his statement was published, Rosenthal was summoned again by the prosecutor, and held onto the views he had expressed.



He was detained, and told that he was to be expelled from Egypt, despite his protestation that he was an Egyptian citizen. The deportation of Rosenthal was an example of a rising and systematic policy in the British policing of socialism, communism and labor activism in Egypt, led by the British European Department within the Ministry of Interior, and approved by the newly-elected government: to deport all "foreigners" or "local subjects of foreign extraction" suspected of communism or active in the labor movement.

A few days later, Rosenthal was put on board the Thimsis, a cargo vessel, and embarked to Romania, but there, he was refused entry. While the Thimsis was roaming the Mediterranean looking for a receiving country in vain, al-Ahram reported regularly on the whereabouts of "the wandering communist".



A month later, Rosenthal was back in Alexandria aboard the same ship. The Egyptian police awaited him at the port to prevent him from landing, but he managed to escape from the ship, to a hospital to undergo a needed operation. The police found him and dragged him back to the ship.

الشيوعي التائب

— استأجره إجراء عملية جراحية له —

الاسكندرية في ١٥ سبتمبر — مراسل
الامهرام الخاص — اجريت اليوم الجراحة
روز قال عملية جراحية في مستشفى الحكومة
ولدت عملية ناجحة وهي تستدعي مكته في
المستشفى عدة ايام
وقد حقق احضرة وكيل ادارة الامن العام
مع الحراس الذين كانوا يحرسون الباخرة «نيس»
يوم حرب روز قال منها لم يجد لهم عدوا مقبولا
بهم تقصيرهم ولذلك ينتظر ان يحالوا الى مجلس
عسكري لحاكمهم

الشيوعي التائب

فراده من الباخرة التي هو فيها واعادته اليها

وصل الى وزارة الداخلية من محافظة
الاسكندرية امس حوالي الظهر بلاغ فجاءه
ان الحراس المكلفين بالحفاظ على المسورين روز قال
ومنهم من مغادرة الباخرة «نيس» التي هو
فيها والزول معها الى ميناء الاسكندرية استعدوه
امس صباحا فلم يجدوه في الباخرة وعلموا انه
زل منها الى الميناء واختفى في الاسكندرية
ووصل اليها منها امس بسد الظهر بلاغ
آخر فجاءه ان البيعت عن المسير روز قال
افنى المهر الخور عليه في مستشفى من
مستشفيات الاسكندرية قال انه احتال فلذهب
اليه على ان تعمل له فيه عملية جراحية وقد اعيد
من المستشفى الى الباخرة التي كان فيها وضعت
اراقة تليه

وتم ان وزارة الداخلية امرت محافظة
الاسكندرية بالتحقيق مع الحراس المكلفين
الحفاظ على المسور روز قال لمرة الطرقتني
استطاع بها الزول الى ميناء الاسكندرية وتعيين
الاشخاص الذين هم عليهم تمة ذلك

الشيوعي التائب

— عودته الى الاسكندرية —

الاسكندرية في ٩ سبتمبر — مراسل
الامهرام الخاص — وصلت الباخرة
«نيس» اليوم الى الاسكندرية وقد صبح
الخبر الذي نشرته مندوبي من عود روز قال
على هذه الباخرة لا الخبر الذي قلناه امس
عن زوله في الاسكندرية فتمنا انه لم يؤخذ له
الزول هناك فقام على قس الباخرة الى
الاسكندرية
ولا افنى الخبر الى السلطة المحلية ارسلت
الحفاظة بضرورة من رجال البوليس لئلا يزول
من السفينة ومراقبته عليها

الشيوعي التائب

الاسكندرية في ٢٧ أغسطس — مراسل
الامهرام الخاص — اتصل الباخرة «نيس»
يوم السبت القادم الى الاسكندرية وهي
الباخرة التي اقلت المسير روز قال «الشيوعي
التائب» الى رومانيا التي ايت عليه الزول فيها
ويؤخذ من رسالة جاءت من المسير روز قال
قده انه لا يزال حتى الان يحارب البحار
على ظهر هذه الباخرة
وقد علم القراء ان حكومة السوفيت قررت
ان تقبله في بلادها وان حكومة رومانيا عادت
فاجازت له المرور منها الى تلك البلاد وعلى ذلك
ففي اليوم الذي يعود به على ظهر الباخرة «نيس»
الى الاسكندرية يماذ على ظهر هذه الباخرة نفسها
الى رومانيا فروسيا

While the authorities were looking for a country to accept to take Rosenthal, he filed a lawsuit against the government, for trying unlawfully to deport him from his own country, citing his rights according to the Egyptian constitution (the first Egyptian constitution had only been written the year before).

After a few weeks in detention, a representative of the Public Security administration, and the head of the Secret Police, both went to see Rosenthal, and offered him to sign a pledge that he "will no longer propagate communist ideas in Egypt and will not interfere in workers' issues", and that he will drop his lawsuit against the government. In exchange, the government will release him and will allow him to apply for Egyptian nationality in the legal ways!



حل مسألة روزنتال

الحكومة تأخذ عليه عهداً

وتتزوج عنه

الاسكندرية في ٢ نوفمبر — المراسل الاهرام
الخصوصي — حلت مسألة الخواجه يوسف
روزنتال وكادت. فقد اتت وزارة الداخلية
حضرة سعيد بك العزبي من ادارة الامن العام
للبحث في امره وحل مشكلته فجاء الى الاسكندرية
لهذا الغرض. وقد ذهب امس الى المستشفى
الاميري — حيث لا يزال روزنتال معتقلاً —
يصحبه حضرة كمال افندي الطرابلسي رئيس
البوليس السري والاساذ مصطفى الطرابلسي
عظمي روزنتال، وبحث الرجل فيها واث
للبحث فيه. وبعد تبادل الاراء والمناقشة في
الموضوع قبل مسيو روزنتال ان يكتب مكال
على نفسه يتعهد فيه بأنه لا يشتغل بعد الآن
ببيت الدعوة الشيوعية في القطر المصري. ولا
يتدخل في شئون البلاد. وأنه يتنازل عن
الدعوة التي رفعا على الحكومة المصرية من
اجل مسألة الجنسية وطلب التوطين. ويتعرف
بأنه من اصل عراقي وجنسية عراقية. وله الحق
في ان يسع السعي القانوني لانبات جنسيته
المصرية

Rosenthal took the offer, but a few weeks after his release, he tried to obtain a voting card and was denied, on the basis that he was not Egyptian, despite all the evidence he presented. Luckily, he had not dropped the lawsuit against the government but only postponed it. When the government found out about this, it sued him for not fulfilling the pledge, which he had signed under pressure in detention!

But the day of the hearing of the lawsuit by the Ministry against Rosenthal, in March 1925, a government official told the judge that there is a reconciliation plan being discussed with Rosenthal, and then made a new offer to Rosenthal, that he drops his lawsuit against the government in exchange for Egyptian nationality.

مسألة نفق روزنتال

ودعواه على الحكومة

الاسكندرية في ٢٨ يوليو — المراسل الاهرام
الخصوصي — علمنا ان السيو جوزف روزنتال
عبدان الاساذن عراقي ووظيفة المدعى
على الحكومة من اجل ما قرنه من امر نفيه
من البلاد بالرغم من ايمانه الى الجنسية انصر به
التي مميها الدستور. وقد ارسل الخاضع انذار
المدعى الى وزارة الداخلية بضر اليوم ليبلغ
اليها هناك والذي يطالب الحكومة بتعويض
مالي قدره ثقب جنيه ما عدا النفقات ثم ان
السيو روزنتال قدم عرضة الى النيابة الاهلية
يشو فيها من البوليس تحتاج على ما اعطته
ادارة الضبط من الاجراءات لتوقيفه وحسنه
بدون ان يكون بيده امر الحبس من النيابة
وبدون ان تسب اليه همة رتمية وهو بظن
يتوحيق قدره ٣٠ جنيه عن كل يوم يسجن
فيه بهذه الكيفية
وقد همما ان النيابة ارسلت هذه الشكوى
اليوم الى معالي النائب العمومي في القاهرة
ولا يزال السيو روزنتال موقوف في اوم
المدعة ولا يؤذن له بالخروج من المكان. وقد
اوضح له حلب بعض المداات من منزله والاختلاط
بالشعوبيين النجسين في قفصه الشيوعية المعروفة
وكانهم لا يراون معتقلين هناك ما عدا الاساذ
مارون الذي غل منذ ايام الى مستشفى سجن
الحضرة الكو به مثل الضحية.

الحكومة وروزنتال

امام القضاء

مسألة الجنسية المصرية

الاسكندرية في ٢ مارس — المراسل الاهرام

الخصوصي — علمنا ان القضية التي رفعتها
الحكومة على الخواجه يوسف روزنتال في
القاهرة تطالبه فيها بالقيام بما تمهده من التنازل
عن دعوى التعويض التي كان قد اقامها عليها
اثاء اعتقاله بسبب الشيوعية — اجلت الى
٢٩ ابريل القادم وقد تلقى السيو روزنتال
كتاباً من وكيله في العاصمة يقول له فيما ياتي:
« بعد ان اعددت الدعوى للرافعة وتوجيت
الى المحكمة لهذا الغرض حضر مندوب من قبل
الحكومة وبلغ المحكمة بان هناك مشروع الصلح
يقضي بأنه اذا اعترفت لكم الحكومة بالجنسية
المصرية فاكم تنازلون عن دعوى التعويض.

What the Ministry of Interior was doing with Rosenthal was symptomatic of a process of securitization of nationality practices, which began under the British, even before the legislation of Egyptian nationality, and continued through the many subsequent re-legislations and amendments that increasingly focused on facilitating the policing of ideas, and of communists and syndicalist socialists.

From 1925 onward, Rosenthal withdrew from communist activism, although he was summoned for interrogation on several occasions after that date.

Charlotte remained active. She was back from Moscow and took charge of the party affairs when the new leadership were all arrested in July 1925, including her husband Avigdor, until she was arrested herself a few weeks later.

She was Accused of "criminal conspiracy to incite to murder and subvert the system of society by force; to form a league of workers and peasants to intimidate capitalists and proprietors and to spread subversive doctrines and literature.." among other accusations..

Rosenthal tried everything to get his daughter out of jail. He asked for the help of the assistant editor of the Egyptian Gazette, and even approached the acting British High Commissioner, to no avail. But the court acquitted Charlotte anyway at the beginning of 1926, after only eight months in jail, while Avigdor and others remained incarcerated for three years, perhaps due to her father's efforts.

Her release raised criticism in the Comintern, where a report said that "she behaved badly during the trial and denied membership in the Egyptian Communist Party". She was also criticized in Moscow for having been represented by a rich lawyer, a member of the reactionary al-Ittihad party, hired by her father.

The following year, the party held a trial against Charlotte, accusing her of refusing to cooperate with party comrades, and of collaborating with her father and others who were dismissed from the party.

Charlotte and her father were the target of absurd accusations from outside the party as well. In early October 1927, they were accused of plotting with the leader of the al-Hizb al-Watani to assassinate King Fuad during his visit to Europe, to overthrow the monarchy and to establish a republican regime, supported by communist Russia. After two months of investigations, the police determined that there was no such plot.

But anyway, the Comintern and Soviet policy were clearly not enthusiastic for Rosenthal or his daughter. Their marginalization as Jews would become policy. In July 1927, in a meeting with the Comintern's Eastern Section in Moscow, al-Urabi criticized the comintern's role in reinforcing a hegemony of Jews in the Arab communist movements. A few months later, Stalin ordered the arabization of the communist parties of the Arab East.



شيوعية صهيونية
هي الآنسة شارلوت روزنتال ابنة المليونير روزنتال الشيوعي المعروف الذي
نقته الحكومة مرة ثم سحقت بمودته وهي من ضمن الشيوعيين المقبوض عليهم
اخيراً والجاري التحقيق معهم في الوقت الحاضر



In 1933, Charlotte was discharged from the University of the Toilers of the East after a purge of the institution, on the ground that she was "an unqualified, and haphazard element". Evaluations in her personal file referred to her father as a corrupting "bourgeois element".

Avigdor himself was arrested in Moscow in March 1936 while he was working as an expert on Middle East affairs in the Eastern Secretariat of the Comintern. He was accused of participating in a trotskyite plot, sentenced to five years in prison, but the sentence was immediately converted to execution. In June 1938, he was shot dead at a training base south of moscow.

Following, the arrest of her husband, Charlotte was also arrested and interrogated, at the conclusion of which she was sent to a hard labor camp in Siberia, where she spent eighteen years, until 1955, when she was released and rehabilitated, like others who had been thrown in the gulag during the Stalinist purge.



In October 1958, Charlotte reunited with her 86 year old father in Alexandria, but only for a short period. Because in March 1959, the Egyptian authorities deported her to the Soviet Union, separating her from her aging father once again!

She lived alone in a Soviet home for the elderly.

Charlotte is considered lucky, since dozens of Jewish communists who had been deported to the Soviet Union from Egypt by the Anglo-British security apparatus, were executed in the stalinist purge or died of the conditions of their banishment in hard labor camps, after they were accused of a variety of political crimes.

What happened to Rosenthal?

He tried again in 1936 to obtain a proof of Egyptian nationality, but his request was rejected based on the Political Police's opinion, because of "his communist views". Rosenthal then filed a lawsuit against the Ministry of Interior, in August 1944, because the Passport and Nationality Department was denying him an Egyptian passport. But this case went on until December 1948, when the court held that it was incompetent to rule on the issue.

He again resubmitted an application to be granted an Egyptian nationality certificate and a passport in 1948, and in 1949, and, faced with the persistent refusal by the Passport Department, he filed a lawsuit against the Ministry of Interior, this time at the recently established State Council.



المملكة المصرية

شهادة جنسية

In the examination of his case in December 1950, the Ministry of Interior's defense raised Rosenthal's communism and the denaturalization and deportation of his daughter in 1931. But the judge refused to accept this as a reason for denying him Egyptian nationality, arguing that this was only lawful in cases of nationality by naturalization and not in cases of nationality by right.

The court thus asserted his right to Egyptian nationality, after 25 years of maneuvering on the part of the Ministry of Interior, and when the man was almost 80 years old, his beloved daughter lay in a labor camp in Siberia, his wife had died, and his other children had left Egypt.

After that, I have not found a trace of Rosenthal. How did he live in Alexandria? Did he really get proper nationality papers after the court rulings? Did he give up?

Most importantly, how did he feel? the tragedy of his daughter and her husband, the oppression raging in the Soviet Union, the only state he had regarded highly, the betrayal by his comrades, the rejection and exclusion by the Egyptian nationalists and harassment by the security apparatus.. It all must have weighed heavily upon him.

In his interview to Yediot Aharonot a few months before his death in 1966, he said he spent the remaining years in Alexandria, absorbed in his work, lonely, but loved and treated well by his surrounding.



In 1963, historian Mohammad Anis wrote an article in the governmental newspaper al-Gomhuriyya, telling the history of Egyptian socialism, and for the first time, giving the main credit to Rosenthal for sowing the seed of the movement.

Anis' articles reached the hands of Charlotte in Moscow, aged 67. She apparently solicited the mediation of Khrushchev to request from Nasser that Rosenthal be allowed to leave Egypt.

Anis' article is thought to have angered Nasser, because it was saying that 'a foreigner' was behind the birth of Egyptian socialism! The old man's jewellery shop was subsequently confiscated, and he was "allowed" to leave Egypt.

Rosenthal decided to spend the little time he had left in Palestine/Israel. He had left Safad eighty years earlier, angry, and determined to spend his life fighting religious dogma, sectarianism, nationalism and capitalist exploitation. Now he was back to spend his last days in his birth place in a completely different reality, one that contradicted all the principles and ideals he had fought for all his life. He died at the end of January 1966.